

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----065660 211444Z /53
P 211353Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7311

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 7222

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ECON, GR, US
SUBJECT: POST-EMBARGO GREECE: NEXT STEPS IN BROADENING
OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

1. COUNSELOR NIMETZ' MEMORANDUM TO THE SECRETARY ON POST-EMBARGO INITIATIVES IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN (7)6 31, 1978) POSED AS A MAJOR POLICY OBJECTIVE THE RESTORATION OF A SENSE OF TRUST AND VITALITY TO US-GREEK RELATIONS, IN PART BY DIRECTING THE FOCUS OF OUR BILATERAL CONCERNS AWAY FROM DOMINANT MILITARY/SECURITY ASPECTS TO BILATERAL COOPERATION IN ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL AREAS. I AGREE FULLY AND WAS PLEASED TO SEE THAT THE SECRETARY HAD APPROVED THIS APPROACH IN THE NIMETZ MEMO. IN THE MONTHS AHEAD IT WILL BE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO ADD DIMENSION TO OUR RELATIONSHIP AND TO PROVIDE SOME DRAMATIC SYMBOL OF NEW OR RENEWED MUTUAL INTERESTS.

2. THE RANGE OF OUR NONMILITARY COOPERATION IS, IN FACT, WIDER THAN POPULAR PERCEPTIONS HERE WOULD INDICATE. BUT TO IMPROVE THE SUBSTANCE AND IMAGE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO EXPLOIT MORE FULLY THE EXCHANGES WHICH DO EXIST, TO EXPAND THE POTENTIAL FOR OTHERS AND, MOST IMPORTANT, TO ENGAGE MORE DIRECTLY AND SYSTEMATICALLY BOTH GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE RESOURCES IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT.

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THIS, IT SEEMS TO ME, CAN BEST BE DONE BY INSTITUTIONALIZING OUR BILATERAL COOPERATION ACROSS A WIDE SPECTRUM OF SHARED CONCERNS.

3. THE OBJECTIVE OF IMPROVING OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP COULD IN PART BE ACCOMPLISHED, I BELIEVE, BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT US-GREECE WORKING GROUPS IN A

VARIETY OF FIELDS OF MUTUAL INTEREST. I WOULD, HOWEVER, PROPOSE TO BEGIN MODESTLY AND EXPERIMENTALLY, WITH ONE OR TWO WORKING GROUPS TO MEET ALTERNATELY TWICE A YEAR IN WASHINGTON AND ATHENS UNDER THE NOMINAL SPONSORSHIP OF OUR RESPECTIVE EMBASSIES AN ARRANGEMENT ROUGHLY ALONG THE LINES OF THAT ENVISAGED FOR YUGOSLAVIA. THE WORKING GROUPS WOULD OPERATE INFORMALLY AND FLEXIBLY, DRAWING TO THE FULLEST EXTENT POSSIBLE ON EMBASSY RESOURCES AND SUPPLEMENTED AS NECESSARY BY TECHNICAL EXPERTS FROM CAPITALS. NO JOINT COMMISSION OR COUNCIL WOULD BE ESTABLISHED AND THERE WILL BE NO COMMITMENT TO REGULARIZE CABINET-LEVEL VISITS. BOTH GOVERNMENTS WOULD REVIEW THE FUNCTIONING AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS AFTER AN APPROPRIATE PERIOD OF TIME TO DETERMINE WHETHER THEY ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF FACILITATING BILATERAL COOPERATION. IN PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT LAST MONTH, I WAS PLEASED WITH THE GENERAL REACTION TO THE CONCEPT.

4. THE POTENTIAL AGENDA FOR SUCH BILATERAL COOPERATION IS A LARGE ONE. IN THE FIELD OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, FOR EXAMPLE, GREECE WOULD BENEFIT GREATLY FROM COLLABORATION WITH US IN THE JOINT DESIGN OF SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENTIFIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND IN THE EXCHANGE OF SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION AND TECHNICAL PERSONNEL. IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD, THE GOG IS
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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----065784 211458Z /46

P 211353Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7312

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ATHENS 7222

EXDIS

JUST BEGINNING TO GRAPPLE WITH THE PROBLEMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION, CONSERVATION AND URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING DIRECTED TOWARD AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF LIFE. IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY, THE DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS IN SOLAR ENERGY RESEARCH, REACTOR TECHNOLOGY AND SAFETY AND IN OTHER FORMS OF ENERGY WOULD MEET PRESSING AND RECOGNIZED NEEDS HERE. IN THIS EARTHQUAKE-PRONE COUNTRY, COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SEISMOLOGY WOULD ALSO SERVE A NUMBER OF HUMANITARIAN AND OTHER PURPOSES.

5. IF THE DEPARTMENT CONCURS, I PROPOSE TO RAISE THE MATTER WITH MITSOTAKIS WHO, AS COORDINATION MINISTER, HAS A WIDE MANDATE TO COORDINATE GOG PROGRAMS IN ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC, ENERGY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER AREAS. ASSUMING MITSOTAKIS IS RECEPTIVE TO THE IDEA, THE EMBASSY WOULD EXPLORE WITH MINISTRY OF COORDINATION OFFICIALS THE NUMBER, SCOPE AND COMPOSITION OF THE WORKING GROUPS. AREAS OF GENERAL INTEREST WILL BE INITIALLY PROPOSED BY THE GOG; THE SPECIFIC IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCH OR OTHER PROJECTS OF MUTUAL INTEREST WOULD BE LEFT TO THE FIRST MEETINGS OF THE RESPECTIVE WORKING GROUPS.

6. OBVIOUSLY, A GOOD DEAL OF STAFF WORK ON THE PROPOSAL WILL HAVE TO BE DONE BY THE DEPARTMENT. AND THE NSC, CONFIDENTIAL

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IF IF APPROVES THE INITIATIVE, WOULD HAVE TO MANDATE THE COOPERATION AND SUPPORT OF OTHER INTERESTED WASHINGTON AGENCIES. GIVEN THE LETHARGIC PACE WITH WHICH THE GREEK BUREAUCRACY OPERATES AND THE DESIRABILITY OF GETTING THE WORKING GROUPS IN TRAIN AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE, I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THE APPROACH TO THE GOG AT AN EARLY DATE. LOOKING A BIT FURTHER AHEAD, IF THE GOVERNMENT OF GREECE AGREES TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF US-GREEK WORKING GROUPS, PERHAPS THE ANNOUNCEMENT COULD BE MADE IN CONJUNCTION WITH AN AGREEMENT TO PROCEED WITH THE DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT OR SOME OTHER IMPORTANT INITIATIVE HERE.

7. I WOULD WELCOME THE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO THE PROPOSAL AND PROCEDURE OUTLINED ABOVE.
MCCLOSKEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, FOREIGN RELATIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ATHENS07222
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780341-0343
Format: TEL
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780840/aaaabgrm.tel
Line Count: 165
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8808dd5f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1669953
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POST-EMBARGO GREECE: NEXT STEPS IN BROADENING OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP
TAGS: ECON, GR, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8808dd5f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014